

Proclamation 6927 of October 3, 1996

National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, 1996

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

Domestic violence threatens the very core of what we hold dear. Millions of women and children throughout our nation are plagued by the terror of family violence each year, and approximately 20 percent of all hospital emergency room visits by women result from such violence. Family violence is a crime that transcends race, religion, ethnicity, and economic stature, and one of its greatest tragedies is its effect on our young people: as many as 3 million children witness violence in their homes each year.

We must never give up in our efforts to transform despair into hope for the women and families across this country who suffer violence at home. We must encourage all Americans to increase public awareness and understanding of domestic abuse as well as the needs of its victims. My Administration is fully engaged in this struggle, coordinating our efforts through the Violence Against Women Office at the Department of Justice and through the Department of Health and Human Services.

Legislation enacted during the past several years is also helping to overcome the scourge of domestic violence. The Violence Against Women Act that I signed into law has given law enforcement critical new tools with which to prosecute and punish criminals who intentionally prey upon women and children. The Interstate Stalking Punishment and Prevention Act of 1996, enacted just last month, makes it a Federal crime for any stalker to cross State lines to pursue a victim, whether or not there is a protection order in effect, whether or not an actual act of violence has been committed, and whether or not the stalker is the victim's spouse. And I am pleased that the Congress has just taken action to keep guns out of the hands of people with a history of domestic violence.

My Administration has also worked to increase the support available for battered women and other victims of domestic violence, including the elderly. In February, I announced the creation of a 24-hour, toll-free National Domestic Violence Hotline, 1-800-799-SAFE. The response to this service has been overwhelming, and the hotline has already received over 50,000 calls—the majority from women and men who have never before reached out for assistance. This year, we will also provide increased and unprecedented resources for battered women's shelters, domestic violence prevention efforts, and children's counseling services.

There is still much more to do, however. The welfare reform legislation that I recently signed recognizes the special needs of domestic violence victims, and I urge all States to accept the option of implementing the new law's Family Violence provisions. I have also directed the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Justice to develop guidance for States and assist them in implementing the provisions. As we help families move from welfare to work, we must ensure that they remain safe from violence in their homes and are given the support they need to achieve independence.

As a result of these and other efforts at the national, State, and local levels, we are one step closer to eliminating domestic violence and building in its place a brighter, more secure future for our families and loved ones. I salute all those whose efforts are helping us in this endeavor and pay special tribute to the survivors of domestic violence whose courage is an inspiration to us all. I urge all Americans to join me in working toward the day when no person raises a hand in violence against a family member.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim October 1996 as National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. I call upon all Americans to observe this month by demonstrating their respect and gratitude for all those individuals who unselfishly share their experiences, skills, and talents with those affected by domestic violence.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this third day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-first.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 6928 of October 4, 1996

Roosevelt History Month, 1996

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

The Roosevelt family has uniquely influenced the direction and quality of life in America for the last century. With two enormously successful Presidents, Teddy and FDR, and a precedent-setting First Lady, Eleanor, the Roosevelt family has left a lasting legacy of exemplary leadership and public service to our Nation.

In 1903, President Theodore Roosevelt established our country's first National Wildlife Refuge. Thanks to his vision and determination, America today enjoys the natural treasures preserved in the largest and most varied conservation system in the world. From 1933 to 1945, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, with the support of his wife, Anna Eleanor Roosevelt, guided the United States through two of the gravest crises of the 20th century: the Great Depression and World War II. Universally recognized as one of the greatest American Presidents, FDR stands as a symbol of the greatness of our Nation itself. Eleanor Roosevelt, his lifelong companion and dearest friend, transformed the role of the First Lady, traveling the country as an advocate for the poor, the disenfranchised, and the disadvantaged.

Together, their partnership redefined the modern First Family, combining a broad concern for all Americans with a strong sense of the dignity and history of the Presidency. In a time of acute national anxiety, FDR promised Americans "a leadership of frankness and vigor." He recognized that government had to be responsive to the needs of its people and that the Presidency is not merely an executive office but also a position of moral